

May 1975

### Mail Problems

All of the overseas subscribers will receive two copies of H.E.N. Nos. 7 and 8. Quite unknown to us our mailroom had decided to send the newsletter by boat. Thanks to a few who wrote to us this problem has been corrected and 7 and 8 were re-mailed by air. Please pass the extra copy on to someone else who might be interested. Because of the delay, papers for the England meeting will still be accepted, but send abstracts of papers, suggestions for discussion groups, etc. to Robert Marvin as quickly as possible.

### Other Meetings

At the back of this issue are the list of papers from: (1) the Society for Research on Child Development held in Denver, and (2) the forthcoming human ethology papers to be given at the Animal Behavior Society meeting in Wilmington, North Carolina, 22-26 May.

It should perhaps be noted in these sets of papers that ages other than infants and pre-schoolers, and methodologies other than just naturalistic observations, are beginning to be employed. If we are to pursue evolutionarily oriented questions about our species--in its full complexity--then this shift in emphasis would appear to be a healthy one.

### Courses in Human Ethology

A number of people have written saying that they were going to offer a course in Human Ethology and wondered if appropriate reading lists were available. If you have developed such a list we would appreciate your sending it to us. From these lists we will attempt to compile both an undergraduate and graduate basic reading list. It would help if the list were annotated so that an instructor could select those that seem most appropriate. Lists in languages other than English should also be submitted. As a start in that direction William Charlesworth produced a one page list. This is available from Donald Omark. If you live in the U.S. please include a stamp.

### Information Needed

Dr. Usher Fleising (together with Robin Fox) is writing a review of human ethology for the 1976 Annual Review of Anthropology. He requests that unpublished material and material not listed in the Human Ethology Roster (H.E.N. #6) be sent to him at: Department of Anthropology, University of Calgary, 2920 24th Ave. N.W., Calgary, Alberta, CANADA, T2N 1N4.

### Membership in the Animal Behavior Society

Since the North American Human Ethology meetings are being held co-jointly with the ABS some of you might be interested in joining ABS. For information write to Dr. Nancy M. Jessop, United States International University, San Diego, California. \$17.50 entitles a member to receive Animal Behaviour (which accepts human ethological articles).

## Journals

Social Science Information has, until recently, had an 'Animal and Human Ethology' section. In an attempt to reach a larger audience this section has been re-named. An edited version of their new editorial policy and where papers may be submitted follows. It should be noted (per communication from Roger Masters) that this section can become an independent journal if it becomes large enough. Semiotica apparently got its start this way. Herewith a call for papers.

## Editorial Statement

Throughout the social sciences, it is increasingly recognized that human social behavior and organization reflect the integration of processes, information, and explanatory variables at different levels of complexity. Since all living beings, including Homo sapiens, can be analyzed at the level of the species or gene pool, the social group or local population, and the individual organism as a complex system, the study of human social life can only be isolated from biological research at the risk of oversimplification. When simplistic reductionism is avoided, introduction of biological findings and approaches into the social sciences has already begun to provide valuable new insights in a wide variety of disciplines.

In recognition of the growing importance of co-disciplinary studies in the biological and social sciences, the "Animal and Human Ethology" section of Social Science Information is being expanded and renamed. To reflect more accurately the Section's objective of presenting articles in which current biological research is carefully integrated into the study of human behavior, its title has been changed to "Biology and Social Life."

While the Section will continue to meet the needs of social scientists for a better understanding of modern ethology, its methodology, and its relevance to human social processes, "Biology and Social Life" will welcome papers dealing with other aspects relating the biological to the social sciences. Particular emphasis will be placed on articles treating theoretical problems or research findings on the borderline of biology and such fields as social psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology and economics.

The "Biology and Social Life" Section actively seeks articles of a sound scholarly nature which represent a positive contribution to the emerging concern for relating the life sciences to all levels of human behavior. Manuscripts should be submitted (two copies) to the Chairman or any other member of the Editorial Board. Although the languages of publication of Social Science Information are English and French, manuscripts in German may be submitted to Professor von Cranach or Prof. van Hooff. Communications concerning manuscripts accepted for publication, subscriptions, etc. may be directed to the Editorial Assistant, Mlle. Anne Balandier (Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 54 Blvd. Raspail, 75006 - Paris, France).

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### Loan Library

Owen Aldis, Behavioral Science Research Fund, P.O. Box 1081, Menlo Park, California 94025, is interested in contacting research workers who have films or video tapes on human aggression and is interested in setting up a loan library for such films.

### Further Comments on Human Ethology

By M.R.A. Chance, University of Birmingham, United Kingdom.

The behavioural sciences came into existence as a result of historical accident and not logical requirements, otherwise ethology would have been the first, not the last discipline to emerge, because observation and description is what is needed before analysis. Ethology is the observation of unrestrained behaviour or, where this is not possible, behaviour isolated as far as possible in a known way from its natural setting. (Chance & Jolly). This leads to the description of the behaviour by whatever framework of units or measures is theoretically justifiable.

Description of the behaviour requires the use of correct language. Then only does descriptive accuracy become possible, the object of which, in the first instance, should be the delineation of behaviour structure, since only then are we appraised of what exists and what may then be analysable. A knowledge of structure must precede analysis in causal or functional terms (Kummer). Hence, logically it is biologically based, i.e., it is concerned initially with species in their natural environment. Like any other part of biology, the theory of evolution is the theoretical background. This is a heuristic aid but not a universal explanation.

If this is ethology, what is human ethology? Well, here at once one needs to recognise that, as Maslow wrote "We have not yet fully defined the nature of the human species", and that to do this, man needs to describe himself in a biological framework. Human ethology is therefore a fundamental part of the disciplines required for founding our understanding of man in biology and is concerned with a definition of individual and group behaviour and with the nature of individual personality, as we can be informed about ourselves from direct observation and logical inference from our primate nature and ancestry. Hence, man's position among the primates needs definition by ethology, and is part of human ethology. Especially important is a recognition that man's evolution is taking place, provided from the start it is

clear that man and individual men make decisions which change the environment within which they and many others live, and man is therefore qualitatively unique in that he constructs the environment, to which he then adapts. Much of his adaptive capacity comes from the use he makes of intelligence. With the advance of knowledge comes the possibility from time to time of interfering with his nature at any level of his existence. Ethology is, however, primarily not concerned with interference procedures, either for the purposes of investigation or producing changes in man's nature. Nevertheless, we are part of the corpus of mankind, some of whom advocate and practice these things. We therefore should promote man's understanding of himself by pointing out the value of self-knowledge to the enhancement of the anagenesis of behaviour, and in this way actively promote an attitude to man's self-evolution.

## References

- Chance, M. R. A. & Jolly, C. J. Social groups of monkeys, apes and men. Jonathan Cape, London and Dutton, New York, 1970.  
Kummer, H. Primate societies. Aldine Atherton, Inc., Chicago, 1971.

By Glyn Collis, University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Of the various opinions on 'what is human ethology?' Grant seems to me to get closest to the crux of the matter. Ethology is the study of behaviour from a biological perspective, but 'biological' beyond the somewhat misleading sense that it is often used in psychology where 'physiological' would be more important. Applied to the human species the foursome of causation, function, ontogeny and phylogeny provides an elegant summary of the areas of interest. The causation/function distinction is of major importance and still bears repetition. The adaptive value of behaviour has been rightly emphasized but we must beware the uncritical acceptance of too easy post hoc hypotheses of adaptive value. Barkow's point about the integration of the biological and cultural is well taken. Even if the cultural or biological dichotomy can be avoided, we still have to steer clear of the 'x% biological, y% cultural' blind alley. Finally, for me, an ethological perspective implies a reluctance to consider behaviour as an index of something as distinct from being the observable part of a process.

Editors' comments: A primary reason for requesting comments about human ethology is to discover the range of opinions which such a 'field' might encompass. The ultimate purpose being the establishment of a journal which would permit communication between those interested in the field. While there are numerous researchers interested in any particular human age range (e.g., mother-infant interactions, attachment behavior, peer group interactions, etc.) the fact that one is interested in humans, as a species and from an evolutionary perspective, shifts one's research questions away from the rather simple paradigms pursued in most of the current disciplines (e.g., psychology, sociology, linguistics, anthropology) into a much more complex arena.

As we see it human ethology over-rides most, if not all, of these disciplines and forces us to ask some very complex questions. The phylogeny of our species has to be considered, while still examining the imaginal and real systems (religion, superstitions, kinship, responses to cultural artifacts) and communicatory -

processes (language) that we know our species possesses. In no sense are we trying to be chauvenistic for our species, but neither do we feel that human ethologists have really come to grips with our species' complexities. What we would now like to see in the Newsletter are some other possible models for the conceptualization of behavior than the typical Stimulus-Response or Cause-Effect model so extant in the literature. Tinbergen (1963) and Grant (H.E.N. #6) suggest other models and Collis's last sentence provides an approach to such a possible model, or models. We have our own ideas about how to analyze behavior but we would be interested in how you conceptualize behavior. As a way to further this debate may we recommend Tinbergen's Nobel Prize address (Science, 5 July 1974), the responses to it (Science, 2 May 1975) and an article by Joseph Rychlak ('What kind of scientific revolution is called for in Psychology?', address: Department of Psychological Sciences, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907, USA). [All responses are subject to editorial shortening.]